



2/25/23

To Whom it may concern,

My name is Mary Lord RN, I have been a RN in Long term care for 38 years, and a Certified CNA prior for a total of 43 years in the nursing home industry. I am now the VP of Clinical Operations for Ark Healthcare and Rehabilitation; we own 3 buildings in Connecticut which includes 384 beds in totality.

I want to testify to my grave concern over the new unfunded Connecticut 4.1hr per day direct care minimum staffing legislative proposal. Increasing the hours per patient day for direct care is a great goal to strive for but the new proposal, coupled with the current hiring environment, without provisional funding comes at an inappropriate time. Anyone who has worked in healthcare or has worked during the covid 19 pandemic knows that staffing shortages have pervaded every sector and industry during this challenging time. The Long-Term care industry has suffered significant loss in the workforce, with nearly 210,000 jobs lost in a 2-year period. Per The American Healthcare Association this is the lowest workforce since 1994. Experts estimate it will take 4 years for this sector of healthcare to recover to pre-pandemic levels. Operators and skilled nursing leadership are facing unprecedented cost and **expenses to staff buildings according to the current ratios, let alone to exceed the staffing patterns. The passing and enforcement of this proposal would put long term care operators and companies in a no win position, continuing to hemorrhage money in efforts to attain an impossible level of compliance. As the pandemic continues to wane and is set to expire in the middle of May, operators, centers, and patients will be forced to absorb a multitude of costs and expenses that have been offset by numerous waivers. This premature proposal and initiative will only compound the financial burden these organizations are shouldering. In a time where facility closures and bankruptcy have become commonplace, additional financial obligations are simply not sustainable.**

I plead with the members of the committees to not pass this staffing mandate at this time and to reconsider the financial implications and current hiring environment.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Lord RN

Vice President of Clinical Operations

Ark Healthcare and Rehabilitation